THE

Oppugnation, and fierce ſiege of *Oſtend*, *by the Archduke* Albertus his Forces, commanded by the Duke of Oſſuna

who came before the ſaide Towne, the fift day of Iune laſt paſt (after their writing) ſhewing what hath hapned ſince the time of the ſaide ſiege.

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The Oppugnation and fierce ſiege of Oſtend, *by the Arch-duke* Albertus his Forces, commanded by the Duke of Oſſuna, who came before the ſaid Towne, the fift day of Iune laſt paſt (after their writing) ſhewing what hath hapned ſince the time of the ſaide ſiege.

OStend is a Towne ſcituated on the Flemiſh coaſt, lying on the arme of the riuer Yperle, thorowe which the weaſt Sluice lately ranne into the Sea, and hath there made a ſufficient tide hauen, which (like as, for the moſt parte, all the reſt of the Flemiſh hauens, doe ebbe and flowe: and can not be vſed, but with an high water, or at the leaſt wiſe, at halfe flod) doth notwithſtanding continually holde, and containe the ditches of the Towne full of water, by reaſon of Dammes and Sluces made to that end and purpoſe, which (foraſmuch as it might be in the ſame courſe continued, returned, or perhappes by the enuemy diuerted) they of the Towne haue, of themſelues, ſtopped the courſe thereof, whereby they of the Country of Flaunders, haue beene forced to carry and conuey the ſame by the Forte of Albertus, and ſo by a newe currant into the Sea.

The ſiege of Oſtend.

In times paſt, it was but an open village, yet reaſonable great, and well peopled. Firſt, after the comming of Don Iohn d'Auſtria, in the beginning of the nowe warres, for the ſitte and commodious ſcituation thereof, it was made a Towne, and enuironed with ſtrong walles: And afterwardes, this Towne only, and none others among all the reſt of the ſea townes of Flaunders remayned, and at this preſent doth remayne in the poſſeſſion or amitie of the vnited prouinces of Holland and Zeland, howbeit, it lieth in the middle (as it were) of the ennemies Countrie, and farre from her friendes. And yet maugre all the forces, and power of her enuironing foes, hath many times beene valiantly defended againſt ſundry beſiegings and attempts.

For in the yeare 1583. although the duke of Parma, with his victorious hoſte (after he had taken Dunkerk, and Newport, the next adioyning ſea Townes weſtward) diede in moſt furious maner beſiege it, vſing all warlike meanes he coulde poſſible to conquer it, was forced to giue place, and after that he had continued his ſiege fiue dayes, ſawe how boteleſſe it was for him to ſpend any longer time about it, and therefore departed, not effecting any thing agreeable to his wiſhed attempts.

Afterwardes, in the yeare 1585. although Monſieur la Motte Gouernour of Graueling, did, with great force and difficultie winne the olde Towne by the ſtrand or ſea ſide, which at that time was onely defended with a ſimple wall, or Raueling and Palliſados, with purpoſe there preſently to intrench and defend himſelfe, was againe with all his forces, like ſheepe driuen out of the ſame, leaning behind him fortie of his principalleſt Captaynes and Commaunders with all their furniture and prouiſion.

This Towne, without all queſtion, is a place of great aduantage, and importaunce, yea of ſuch moment, that it ſerueth as a bulwarke and ſtrong defence, for the whole prouince of Zeland, and ſo contrariwiſe, if it ſhoulde fall into the

the enemies hands (as God forbid) he ſhould thereby commaund a more fitte and commodious hauen for ſhipping, than any other ſea Towne nowe in his poſſeſſion can yelde him. Yea our intollerable loſſes, not to be recouered doe teach vs, and as it were, with a finger poynt vnto vs, what inestimable domage might redound vnto the vnited Prouinces, if the enemy ſhould commaund in this Town.

Further, it is to be noted, that the Country of Flaunders, beeing in peace, in all tarations of the ſeauenteene Prouinces did leuy the third peny: whercunto they haue beene forced by this Towne, not only during the time of theſe wars, but alſo, the greateſt part of the maine land hath beene conſtrained many yeeres, to pay toll and contribution, and to be vnder our deuotion.

For which cauſes, this Towne hath with great care and mighty charges of the vnited Prouinces bin daily fortified, and continually ſtrengthned, and eſpecially in the yeere laſt paſt 1600. as alſo in the fore parte of this preſent ſummer: many workes, I ſay, haue beene deuiſed to withſtand, and preuent the cruell attempts of the bloody enemy, as bulwarkes, counterpoynts, and Rauelings to the landward, neither hath that part lying to the Sea beene forgotten, but hath beene made alſo very defencible with braues, bankes, and ditches, and eſpecially on the eaſt ſide of the Towne where (by meanes of the weakeneſſe of the bankes) the ſea, with great force is mightily broken into the land, where it hath ſhowred, and pierced a great depth; ſo that the chanel of the new hauen (when the water is loweſt) is neere fiue pikes deepe: and doth daily ware deeper and deeper, without all doubt, the determinate worke of God, for the great ſtrengthning and playne defence of the Towne.

They of Flaunders generally finding what annoyaunce and great diſcommoditie this Towne threatned daily vnto them, haue ſolicited and by all meanes poſſible importuned their Gouernours, to beſiege, and conquer this Towne of

The ſiege of Oſtend.

Oſtend, their daily eie ſore: as of late yéres (yet freſh in memorie) in the yeare 1596. after that the Archduke Albertus had taken the Towne of Callice, in Fraunce, they required him then to take in hand this péece of worke, promiſing to giue him twelue hundred thouſand gilderns within three moneths time (which in ſterling money is one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds) wherevnto, after his Highneſſe had made ſhew to yéelde, and promiſed to fulfil their deſire, he gote ſome parte of the ſumme aforeſayde into his handes. But doubting the euent of the attempt, or knowing howe hard a matter it was, to take it by force of armes, or how difficult it woulde be to conſtraine the ſouldiers thereof by hunger, or otherwiſe, thought it ſufficient to ſhew himſelfe before the Towne with his forces, and ſo quietly to departe.

They of Flaunders herewith nothing at all pleaſed, and greeued with the continuall veratione and incurſions of the ranging ſouldiers, and payment of contributions, to preuent the ſame, in the yeere of our Lord 1599. while our forces were imployed in the defence of Bommel, had good leyſure to make ſundry ſorts and bulwarkes, for the ſtrengthening, & defence of the wayes and paſſages about the townes of Oſtend, thereby (as it were with a ſmall kinde of ſiege) continually to trouble the Dewae, and to hinder the incurſions of the gariſon: which deuice was put into their heads, and the plotte layde downe by a certaine Corporall of the Towne called Noel, who hauing before long ſerued in the towne, and hauing good experience of the ſecrets thereof, vpon ſome diſcontentment receiued, forſoke the Towne, and ran to the ſeruice of the enemy.

But as the experience of the laſt yeare giueth ſufficient proofe, that all the ſtrength of theſe Fortes is not able to hinder, or defend the entrance of an Hoſte, ſo alſo it is moſt manifeſt that by the continuall charge of the Garriſons of theſe Fortes, the Country hath receiued more domage and diſ-

com-

commoditie, then before it did by the contribution to their enemies, and Towne of Oſtend; wherefore they haue bẽ forced to renewe their Importunate ſute vnto his Highnes, and to ſollicit him againe to the beſieging of Oſtend, and eſpecially at this inſtant, knowing our forces to be remoued farre from them, and to be ſent into Dutchland lying at the ſiege of Berck, where they ſhould (as they imagined) haue long worke: And for the better perſwading, and more eaſily drawing of the Archduke to harken to this their ſute, haue promiſed to pay him extraordinarily, three hundreth thouſand gilderns Monthly (which is 30 thouſand pounds ſtarling) during the time of the ſiege, and after the taking of the towne to pay him farther (for the ſpace of two years) ninety thouſand gilderns euery month (which is 9000. l. ſtarling.

Hereupon th Archduke gathred together al his ſouldiers: yea ſuch as were about the riuer of Ryne & the Maſe, for the ſuccor of Berck were ſent for, to make their repaire into Flaunders and to ſerue vnder the commaund of the Duke of Oſſuna, who not long ſince was to that end ſent for out of Spaine, by reaſon that the Archdukes campe (through the long impriſonment of the Admirant of Arragon, and the laſt ouerthrowe in Flaunders) was wholy left deſtitute and vnprouided of a ſufficient Commaunder, and experient Leaders, and for that the naturall Lordes of the land, are in no wiſe reſpected nor truſted.

VPon the fift day of June (after the new ſtile) the enemie came before Oſtend, about none, with eight regiments of footmen, which were eight thouſand men ſtrong, beſides the horſemen (notwithſtanding the Spaniards generally diſliked of this enterprize, and counſelled the contrary, who (as is reported) do wholly diſlike of this ſiege: and among the reſt, two common ſouldiers that hadde bẽne the laſt yeare priſoners in Oſtend, obſtinately maintaining the inuincible ſtrength of this Towne, were preſently

taken and hanged: for the extreame want of the three hundred thouſand gilderns, to be payed monthly, as before is ſaide, comming very fitly for the payment of the mutined ſouldiers, and alſo the hope to draw our forces from the ſiege of Bercke, into Flanders, for the better furniſhing of himſelfe, & preventing of ſuch wants as might happen to Oſtend: and perhaps thinking ſodainly, and with al his force to overcharge the towne before it ſhould be ſuccored, haue bin the reſons to bring th Archdukes forces now before Oſtend.

The Duke of Oſſuna preſently ſought to pacifie the garriſon of Iſſabella, which had before mutined for their pay: and the next day following, being the firſt day of July, mounted ſix peces of ordonance againſt the eaſt ſide of the towne vpon the Downes, and with the ſame beganne fiercely to play vpon the Towne.

There were then in the towne in garriſon one and twenty Ancients of ſundry Regiments, and one company of Burgers, or Townesmen, all vnder the direction and commaund of Captayne Vander Noote. Theſe preſently prepared themſelues to their defence, making harmeleſſe, and diſplacing ſome of the enemies artillerie: And labouring hard, to make a new way or hauen, betweene the heads, to the end the paſſage of boates and ſhipping might be freed from the ordonaunce of the ennemy.

And the ninth day of July, after that they had ſent away the moſt parte of their wiues and children, they receiued into the towne (out of Zeland) 28. cõpanies of ſouldiers, with great abundance of victuals, and all other proviſion of war.

The tenth day ſir Frances Vere, with eight companies of Engliſhmen entred into the Towne alſo, who preſently iſſued out of the Towne with his people, entrenching himſelfe on the drie plottes of ground next vnto the walles, on the weſt ſide, from whence the enemy might haue endomaged the towne, and battered the walles.

The thirteenth day of July, the ſayde ſir Frances Vere,

with

with great force and reſolution ſallied vpon the enemy with eight hundred men, on the weſt parte of the towne, and ſet vpon the Campe, which lay farre off diuided from each other, with waters and marſh grounds, and can not eaſily, or in ſhort time come to ayde each other. In which ſally, the ennemy loſt (as was certified by Letters from Antwerpe) aboue eight hundred men, and among the ſame, one cornet of horſemen: and, if the whole force of the ennemies horſemen, had not the ſoner come to their ayde, it was moſt apparant to all mens iudgements, that ſir Frances had driuen the ſwtemen to great confuſion, and taken from them their Ordonance.

The fiue and twentieth day ſir Frances Vere did agayne iſſue out of the Towne with fifteene hundred men, and beganne to intrench betweene Iſſabella and Grootendorſt, on a high ground, which in times paſt was an old Churchyard, where they of Iſſabella and Grootendorſt were accuſtomed to bury their dead, and is a very fitte and apt place, to ſeperate and cutte off theſe two Fortes from each others helpe, and to open a faire way to thoſe of Oſtend, to the flatte and plaine land. To which place of buriall, the next day, being the ſixe and twentieth day of July, the ennemy came with three thouſand men, and after hee had beene thrice repulſed, and put to the worſt, toke the place, but was preſently with great force and dexteritie driuen from it agayne.

The ſame day tenne companies of ſouldiers arriued at Oſtend, and were receiued into the Towne, which were ſent thither by her Maieſtie from London, ſo that now the Towne was furniſhed (within the walles and without) with ſixtie and ſeauen companies, which made by neere the number of ſeuen thouſand men: theſe tenne companies aforeſayde, were preſently employed againſt the enemy, who ſhewed themſelues very valorous, and did both then, and ſince, paſſing good ſeruice, although many men were of opinion, that they would proue vnfitte for any ſeruice, by

reason they were rawe, and had not bene trayned.

On the other side, the Archduke daily strengtheneth and encreaseth his Campe, as well with souldiers, as with ordonance, playing continually on the west side with 26. peces, and on the east side with nine peces of ordonance, but most of his shotte lieth vppon the houses, whereof many are defaced and beaten downe: For, this fire and twentieth day of July, and before, there had bene discharged vppon the Towne sixteene hundred shot, and against the ennemie from the Towne had bene counterchanged six thousand.

Moreouer, there were also received into the Campe some parte of the new souldiers which came out of Italie, and had bene appoynted for the succour of Berke, for first there arriued eight hundred men of those companies, and afterwards fiue and twenty hundred more were sent for, part Italians, and part Spaniards: and besides these, xx. men more out of all the other Ancients vnder the gouernment of the Erle of Barlamont and Bucquoy, who, for this cause, were forced to discharge their wagons, and other prouisions, before by them taken vp, and meant to be vsed in raising the siege before Bercke.

There are eightene companies appoynted euery night out of the Towne, to garde sir Frances Veres trenches on the southwest parte of the Towne, who daily falleth out vppon the ennemy, with other souldiers of the Towne, and haue oftentimes slayne many of the ennemies, & wounded more, which haue bene sent to Bruges from the Campe, so that their Hospitalles are full of wounded souldiers, and many Captaines, and men of great accompt, aswell Spaniardes, Italians, and others, haue bene slaine in these conflictes, and amongest the rest, a Colonell of the Spaniardes was brought to Dunkerke, and there first buryed in his armour, and afterwardes taken vp againe, and put into the earth in a Friars weede, with great solemnitie.

On Sonday, being the sixe and twentieth day of July last

laſt paſt, was a great ſkirmiſh with the ennemy, which continued very long, and was with great furie, valour, and reſolution maintained on both ſides, the ennemy ſupplying his ſouldiers with freſh companies, bringing three, foure, and fiue companies at a time, and they of the Towne ſeconding their parte continually with newe ſupplies, and with like numbers, ſo that in the end, it ſeemed rather a little battell, than a ſkirmiſh, ſometime our people being ouermatched with the freſh companies of their ennemies, were forced to giue ground: but preſently againe, with their new ſupplies from the Towne, courageouſly preſſed into the thickeſt of the enmies, making them likewiſe to retire into their trenches: and thus it continued long, ſometimes the one parte, and ſometimes the other giuing ground, vntill the ennemies horſemen came in, to ſuccour their footemen, whereuppon our men returned into their trenches, and into the Towne, after they had ſlaine and ſpoiled many of their enemies both horſe and foote. But if our men had beene furniſhed with horſemen, the ennemy had loſt many more men than hee did, both in this ſkirmiſh, and all others before: but herein, the enemy hath had the vantage of vs during this ſiege, notwithſtanding it hath beene written from Callice, that after this fight, there were carried out of the Campe to Bruges three ſcore and ten wagons laden with wounded men, and in euery wagon was tenne men at the leaſt: but when they were brought to Bruges, they of the Towne woulde not receiue them, ſaying that they had their Hoſpitalles alreadie full, and coulde receiue no more, and therefore required that they might be conueyed to ſome other townes. It was afterwardes reported, that the ennemy loſt in this ſkirmiſh 450. men, beſides thoſe that were wounded: neyther was this attempt accompliſhed, without loſſe on our ſide.

Saterday, being the firſt day of this preſent moneth of Auguſt, they of the Towne iſſued againe vpon the ennemy, and with great furie (after they had continued ſkirmiſh ſom

halfe houre) forced them to retire to their trenches, slaying some 80. of their enemies, as neere as could be iudged: but the horſemen of the enemy comming in vpon our ſouldiers, they returned into the Towne, with ſmall loſſe on our part.

It is reported by ſome that come very lately from Callice, that on wedneſday laſt, being the firſt day of this preſent moneth of Auguſt, there was a great Skirmiſh begunne by thoſe of the Towne, to hinder the enemies approach vnto the walles, which was with fierce reſolution long continued on both ſides, and that they of the towne (with great ſlaughter of their enemies) had taken three or fiue peeces of ordonance, and brought the ſame into the Towne, but how certaine this is (being but a reporte) I cannot write, the trueth thereof will be hereafter better knowne.

Sir Frances Vere without the Towne doth daily fortify his trenches: and the Gouernour within the Towne, with earth raiſeth the walles, thereby to anoyde the daunger of the enemies ſhot, which his Highneſſe ſpareth not, but beſtoweth ſo liberally vpon the Towne, as if he ſound ſhot and powder aboundauntly in the Downes, or ſand-hilles: and withall, laboreth to raiſe a new Caualliric, with bauen and earth, thereon to plant more ordonaunce, and to ſhote into the Towne, on the ſouth ſouthweſt ſide. Thus they are earneſtly buſied on all ſides, the one, nor the other ſparing any coſt or labor to annoy their enemy, and to defend themſelues, and that thing which to day is not thought vpon, is the next day put in practiſe, with new deuiſes and warlike ſtratagems, the one raiſing vp, the other with his ordonance beating downe his enemies workes, that the ſame may not be finiſhed, or brought to perfection.

It is alſo written from Antwerpe, that the Infanta is in perſon come into the Campe, and that the Archduke is in Oudenburgh, to the end he may himſelfe in perſon giue order in theſe affaires: time will teach vs to knowe what profite he ſhal reape by theſe his trauels & ineſtimable charges.

But

But at her returne from the Camp to Bruges, ſhe brought with her ſundry Companies of Souldiers, but they of the Towne denyed to receiue them, ſaying they had no neede of any new Garriſon, but if it pleaſed her highnes to come into the Towne with her accuſtomed trayne, ſhe ſhould be welcome: but as for her Souldiers, they were not minded to take them into the Cittie.

Such as haue come out of Oſtend very lately, and likewiſe from Vluſhing, report for certaine, that within the Towne of Oſtend, there wanteth not any thing, fit for the defence thereof, and that all victualles are very plentifull, Engliſh beere is ſolde for two ſtiuars the kanne, great meaſure, for which there is no exciſe payde. Sir Frances Vere giueth the enemie daily ſo much to doe, and keepeth him ſo well occupied, that he knoweth not well which way to turne him, or what he may well beginne to annoy the Towne: and it is thought by many men of good iudgement, that he wiſheth he had not come to beſiege Oſtend, ſeeing he findeth ſo ſmall hope to carry it, but would rather be with his camp from thence, if he knew how with credite to departe.

Lately the enemy remoued nine peeces of his ordonance, from the eaſt to the weaſt ſide: his ordonance made it veris dangerous to enter by the accuſtomed hauen, except it were in the night time, but ſince the making of the laſt, or middle hauen, all things are carried in and out without any daunger of the enemies ſhot. And on the ſouthweſt ſide the enemy bringeth great ſtore of bruſh and bauen fagots towards the trenches of ſir Frances Vere, thinking by that meanes ſo to mount ſome ordonaunce, that he may beate ſir Frances from his trenches, and ſo bring his battering peeces nearer vnto the walles, or elſe, to beate the Towne on the ſouth ſouthweſt ſide.

On the ſouth ſide, the ennemy hath raiſed a mount, from whence he beateth the houſes, but ſpecially the Church and Staple, which is wholy defaced, otherwiſe, he doeth ſmall annoy-

annoyance to the Towne, sometimes with his shot killing a man: but such as come out of the Towne affirme, that for euery one the Towne loseth, the enemy loseth fiue or sixe. They of the Towne, haue themselues, vntiled and taken downe many houses, and also vnpaued the strietes, to thend the same might with the enemies shot, the lesse annoy them.

The Gouernor and sir Frances are not ydle, but employ all their labour and industrie, both within the Towne and without, to raise mounts, and to finish such other workes, as are most behoueful for the strengthening of the Towne against the enemies forces, and to that end, such souldiers as will worke, and employ their time that way, eyther by day or night, haue xii.d. the day, and xii.d. the night.

And because the enemy shall the better be kept from approching the walles, they of the Towne haue cutte the Sea banckes, so that the Sea water enuironeth the Towne on the south side, from the east to the weast parte, in so much that the towne seemeth to stand in an Island, which threatneth great hurt to the land and countrie thereabouts, and may (in time) growe very daungerous.

Within the Towne, neere vnto the west end, they haue raised a mount, whereon is planted twelue cannons, and fixe demy cannons, wherewith they beate downe, and deface the ennemies workes without.

Lastly, such as came on wednesday last out of Ostend, being the fift day of this present August, report, that the enemie hath these eight dayes layne still, and doone nothing, and affirme, the souldiers of Ostend to be of an inuincible courage, not esteeming any force of the enemy, and that there is no cause of feare, nor want, for all things are daily in most plentifull sort brought vnto them, assuring themselues, that the ennemy shall (in the end) be forced to depart with shame and dishonor, and perhappes with greater losse than he now thinketh vppon, which God for his mercies sake graunt, Amen.

Finis.

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